

## Contributed

### WHEN ON MY DAY OF LIFE THE NIGHT IS FALLING.

When on my day of life the night is falling,  
And, in the winds from unsunned spaces blow,  
I hear far voices out of darkness calling  
My feet to paths unknown.

Thou hast made my home of life so pleasant,  
Leave not its tenant when its walls decay;  
O Love Divine, O Helper ever present,  
Be thou my strength and stay!

Be near me when all else is from me drifting;  
Earth, sky, home's pictures, days of shade and shine,  
And kindly faces to my own uplifting  
The love which answers mine.

I have but thee, my Father! Let thy spirit  
Be with me then to comfort and uphold;  
No gate of pearl, no branch of palm I merit,  
Nor street of shining gold.

Suffice it if—my good and ill unreckoned,  
And both forgiven through thy abounding grace—  
I find myself by hands familiar beckoned  
Unto my fitting place.

—Whittier.

### A HEATHEN CUSTOM.

In his "Life of Christ," Dean Farrar graphically sums up the beneficent changes wrought by Christianity. There is no class of wrongs, he says, which it has not remedied. Indeed, in emancipating the slave, in elevating woman, in nursing the sick, in honoring infirm old age, in sheltering the orphan, and in shrouding as with a halo of sacred innocence the tender years of the child, it substantially vindicated its superior vigor and effectually triumphed over the cruelties of heathenism.

This is beautiful. It is Utopian. Christianity is indeed the cure-all. Were it universally practiced all social and economic, all moral and ethical wrongs would readily be adjusted and ameliorated. What is the attitude towards the old? When one observes the general treatment accorded old age, one seriously deplores the practice of the heathen custom of abandoning the old to die. Though the treatment may be less grossly inhumane than the heathen custom of driving the old out into the lonely solitudes of the barren mountains and plains to die of neglect and starvation, still the old are practically turned off to die by being debarred from participating in the common employments and affairs of life where they must necessarily win their daily bread.

It is related that the employers in a large city recently refused men over fifty years of age. A special employment bureau, organized for the purpose of lending gratuitous assistance to the unemployed, found itself handicapped by being unable to secure work for a number of men solely because they were over fifty years of age. With no competency, devoid of relative support, competent and willing, yet unable to get work, these quinquagintarians were turned off either to beg, or steal, or commit suicide, or die by starvation.

According to the modern conception, this is progress, but according to the Christian conception, this is heathenism. It is a condition which, if not remedied, will tend to multiply frightful suicides, increase the percentage of criminals, and darken the times with frequent ghastly deeds of violence and crime. However much it may surprise, chagrin, or grieve, it must be acknowledged that this custom obtains in the church. Let a minister show signs of approaching age, or let it be known that he is fifty years old, and he is relegated to the class of undesirables. A congregation was considering a minister with a view to calling him. The moment it was ascertained that he was fifty, notwithstanding his superb qualifications, his extraordinary physical and mental vigor, his accumulated resources of knowledge and experience, he was so speedily and insolently dropped that one shuddered in view of such heathen contempt should one attain the fiftieth milestone.

Not so long ago a committee approached a neighboring pastor with the urgent request that he assist them in getting rid of their preacher, the only reason assigned for this course towards one who had baptized them, married their children, buried their dead, devotedly served them amid every varying circumstance, was, "He is getting old, and we want a young man." Alas! "He is getting old." Having given his life to the services of God, having spent his energy in the effort to do good, having endured untold privations and discomforts for others, alas! when his hair grows thin and silvery, when his face is furrowed with lines of thought and care, when his form inevitably yields to weariness, the sadness of prolonged life is deepened by being turned off to die. "Progress!" says the modernist. It is the very antipode to progress. It is the quintessence of heathenism.

The practice and tolerance of this custom which is a positive violation of the law of God is sapping the vitality of the church and impairing its usefulness. It is impossible to perpetuate youth, but it is possible by divine grace to honor and prefer age for its hoary head and superior wisdom. So long as this sin lies at the door of the church, so long will there be a dearth of candidates, so long will infidelity give needless annoyance, so long will the looked-for revival tarry.

"So let our lips and lives express  
The holy gospel we profess;  
So let our works and virtues shine  
To prove the doctrine all divine."

Don't send your children to the Sunday school! Take them! The need for you to go is just as great as that for your children. Your going will make it a greater pleasure to them. The time will be but little and will not be missed out of your household business. It will be better spent than in lolling about the house or reading that Sunday paper. You need to know more about the Bible. Under modern methods ample provision is made for profitable study in adult classes. And if you know so much that you do not need to go as a student, why the more reason to go, that you may give out of the wealth of your knowledge something that will help others.